palm oil adversely affected the price of coconut oil;

(b) whether duty component on the import of edible oil has been determined; if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what has been the drop in various edible oil prices following Government's decision to put oils in the CGL category?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) There is no direct co-relation between the import of palmolein and behaviour of coconut oil prices at the macro level.

(b) The import of edible oils except coconut oil, Palm Kernel oil, RBD Pal Oil and RBD Palm Stearin has been placed under OGL w.e.f. 1.3.95 at 30% duty.

(c) The wholesale price index of sub-group edible oils has recorded a slight decrease of 0.2% during the period 25.2.95 to 4.3.95.

Coffee through PDS

2033. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Coffee Board has offered coffee to the Public Distribution System;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the quantity offered; and

(d) whether acute shortage of coffee is due to lack of planning by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Though domestic prices are considerably high, on account of rise in the international price of coffee, there is as such no shortage of coffee.

Clearance of claims of engineering goods exporters

2034. SHRI K.M. KHAN:
SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of claims of engineering goods exporters for payment of their claims under International Price Reimbursement Scheme are pending with Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these claims are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As on 13th March, 1995, the total value of claims pending with Engineering Export Promotion Council under the International Price Reimbursement Scheme (IPRS) is Rs. 187.20 crores.

(c) IPRS payments are primarily financed out of receipts from the Engineering Goods Export Assistance Fund (EGEAF) cess, levied on integrated steel plants. Efforts are being made to ensure early clearance of pending claims.

Ceiling on grant of permits for Export of Seeds

2035. SHRI G. PRATHAPA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have imposed ceiling on the grant of permits for export of some varieties of seeds in 1993-94 and 1994-95;

(b) if so, the details of varieties of seeds for which there is a quantitative ceiling and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to liberalise the present policy or undertake a periodic review to eliminate such quantitative ceiling or total ban on export; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) No, Sir. There are no quantitative ceilings fixed for export of seeds for sowing or planting purposes. However, under the current Export-Import Policy, export of seeds and planting material listed in the Negative List of Exports Part II — Restricted Items is permitted subject to licencing. Export of such seeds is permitted keeping in view the domestic availability and demand.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

Complaints regarding export of inferior quality of tea

2036. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:
SHRI K.M. KHAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether repeated complaints have been made by the Russian importers about inferior quality of tea being supplied by Indian exporters;

(b) whether the Indian Embassy in Russia had earlier pointed out that the tea industry should take the issue of quality of tea being exported more seriously; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to enforce strict standards for testing the samples of tea prior to issue of export licences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Complaints were received by the Tea Board in 1993 against a few Indian exporters for export of sub-standard and inferior quality teas to Russia and some of the CIS countries.

(b) Indian Embassy in Russia had sent reports in June, 1993 recommending quality control of tea exported to Russia.

(c) In order to enforce strict quality control in exports of tea to Russia, exporters have been advised to obtain quality certificates from SGS, India or any other agency recognised by the Russian importers before obtaining shipment licences for export to Russia/ CIS countries.

Impact of Beedi Production on market for Tobacco

2037. SHRI S. AUSTIN:
SHRI V. RAJAN CHELLAPPA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the beedi industry uses a lot of tobacco;

(b) whether Tobacco Board studied the impact of lowering beedi production on the market for tobacco; and

(c) if so, the details of such study?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir. About 30 percent of the Non-Virginia tobacco produced in the country is consumed by the beedi industry.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Export of wood and wood products

2038. SHRI T. VENKATRAM REDDY:
SHRI G. PRATHAPA REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the total quantity of wood and wood products exported and the foreign exchange earned therefrom during each of the last three years; and

(b) the steps being taken by Government to boost the exports of these items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.